

Interview: Catherine Clover

SoundLab sonic art project environments

<http://www.nmartproject.net/artists/?p=459>

August 27th, 2006 at 4:30 pm · Filed under [SIP - Interviews](#)

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Catherine Clover

biographical info at the end of the page—>

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Interview: 10 questions

1. When did you start making music, what is/was your motivation to do it?

I was musical as a child, learning piano and clarinet, but did not pursue it. I trained as a visual artist [painter] in the mid 80s, and discovered the sound world again in 2001 when I spent two years learning the skills to work creatively with digital software [Electronic Design and Interactive Media at RMIT, Melbourne]. I found working with sound and the moving image completely addictive. When I say moving image, I mean animating techniques rather than video – the placing of static images that appear to create movement. There was no actual sound section on this course – we were encouraged to use pre-existing sounds. I found the limitation of copyright associated with this process too restrictive, and so got interested in creating my own sound works, firstly as sound associated with experimental animations, and subsequently as sound works in their own right.

2. Tell me something about your living environment and the musical education.

I was born and bred in London UK, and had the opportunity for an arts residency in Melbourne, Australia with Gertrude Contemporary Art Space during the 90s. I decided to stay for a while and am still here. I am lucky enough to regularly return to London, about once a year, so feel I can keep a foot in both camps to an extent, and this is important to me. I studied piano and clarinet at school. My partner, Cameron Robbins, is a musician and I frequently source his expertise in relation to my sound works.

3. Is making music your profession? What is the context in which you practice music nowadays?

I have always thought of myself as a visual artist, but nowadays sound making comprises just as much a part of my creativity and exhibiting. There is a growing interest in sound work these days, so while I often exhibit audiovisual works I am also exhibiting sound works in their own right more frequently. I show work most frequently in artist-run spaces [as opposed to commercial settings] as those spaces tend to embrace experimental work. I also show work in festivals and prizes internationally both in 'reality' and online. I enjoy working site specifically and showing work outside the white cube of the 'gallery' or the black box of the 'moving image' for example in the public domain [eg public projection sites etc].

4. How do you compose or create music or sound? Have you certain principles, use certain styles etc?

I make field /phonographic recordings. I am fascinated by the musicality of 'found sound'. The recordings comprise the seemingly less apparent sounds of the daily round, and focus attention upon that which is commonly overlooked or even psychologically 'inaudible' much of the time.

The element of chance is embedded in this process and forms an important part of the outcome. The frequency and repetitive nature of many of such sounds ensure their inevitable drift to the backwaters of consciousness by local populations. They constitute the sounds that evoke the identity of a place and are frequently noticed only by visitors.

5. Tell me something about the instruments, technical equipment or tools you use?

I use the wonderfully redundant minidisk for recording, with a small but effective stereo microphone. The portability of the minidisk is a real plus particularly as I am out and about making field recordings a lot of the time. I edit sound using Audition on a pc, which serves my purposes well.

6. What are the chances of New Media for the music production in general and you personally?

New Media has enabled me to [re]discover the sound world, so it has been incredibly significant. There is a lot of talk about the reduction in the subtlety and range of sound with the impact of the digital on sound production, yet at the same time the liberation of being able to create with affordable equipment, plus downloading from the internet, cannot be underestimated. I do have mixed feelings about the highly compressed mp3 format. I tend to make a real attempt to limit compression with my work, yet I am thoroughly committed to participating in and contributing to online projects and festivals [such as soundLAB].

7. How about producing and financing your musical productions?

I support myself mainly through teaching – in the media/writing departments at Swinburne University, Melbourne, both undergrad and postgrad. I am lucky enough to teach online, which makes things very flexible. I also design websites. I receive some funding and some sales, but these are not regular enough to live on.

8. Do you work individually as a musician/soundartist or in a group or collaborative? If you have experience in both, what is the difference, what do you prefer?

I work mainly on my own, but have also collaborated. They are both very rewarding experiences. The sound work submitted here is part of a collaboration with a percussionist based in Brisbane, Vanessa Tomlinson. The project was Double Venturi, and there were 8 of us in total, all responding in a site specific manner to the Melbourne Town Hall, the centre of civic power in the City of Melbourne.

9. Is there any group, composer, style or movement which has a lasting influence on making music?

Aurally, I am interested in work by Joyce Hinterding [Australia], Ros Bandt [Australia], Jodi Rose [Australia], Iain Mott [Australia], Granular Synthesis [Germany], Bill Fontana [US], Chris Watson [UK], and John Cage [US]. Fluxus would be the movement that has been of most interest.

10. What are your future plans or dreams as a soundartist or musician? out of competition: Add a brief bio of yours (no longer than 300 words in English) Can works of yours experienced online besides on SoundLAB? Where? List some links & resources

Short term, I plan to do more collaborations as they are so rewarding in terms of thinking on your feet, learning fast, and establishing solid relationships with peers. Long term, I hope to earn my living purely through creative activities.

Bio:

Catherine Clover born and bred in London, UK, and has been based in Melbourne, Australia, since 1994. Initially working with painting and installation, her practice currently concentrates on the mediums of sound and digital imaging. She works predominantly with field recordings [sound] and found objects [visual]. Current employment is with the Writing/Media Departments at Swinburne University, Melbourne, plus freelance web design work. Recent exhibitions include *Dislocate*_Trampoline UK in association with Ginza Art Laboratory Japan, *Max 5 Projektor* Video Survey_Café Gallery Projects, London, UK, *Scinema* 2006 Festival of Science Film [CSIRO], Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, Australia, *Wilderness Information Network* Upper Catskills, New York, US *Federation Square* Public Projection, Melbourne, Australia, *Double Venturi* Melbourne Town Hall, Melbourne, Australia, *Radio Sound Art* 209 Radio, Cambridge, UK, *MusicAcoustic* 2005:Mix Beijing China, *FILE Hipersonica* Sao Paulo Brazil, *SoundLab Channel* Editions II and IV Cologne, Germany.

Other links:

www.ciclover.com

<http://soundtransit.nl/>

<http://www.virtual-residency.net/>

http://www.file.org.br/works_list.php?works_category_display=1.2.6&sel=7.5&lang=en